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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001038

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [HQ](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: OAS BRIEFS G-16 ON FM DELEGATION VISIT

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 1011

[1](#)B. TEGUCIGALPA 1010

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b/d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Organization of American States (OAS) Special Envoy Ambassador John Biehl told the G-16 donors' group on October 8 that earlier in the day the commission of President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya to the ongoing OAS-sponsored negotiations had threatened to pull out of the talks. The Zelaya faction was upset because some of the OAS Foreign Ministers who traveled to Honduras October 7-8 addressed de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti as "Mr. President." They also objected to Micheletti statements that any agreement would need legislative approval. The Zelaya faction was scheduled later in the day to advise the OAS whether they would continue negotiating. Biehl later informed the Ambassador that they had agreed to continue the talks. Biehl also told the G-16 that the OAS is negotiating with the de facto regime to allow President Zelaya's transfer from the Brazilian Embassy to his private residence in Tegucigalpa. End Summary.

Zelaya Commission Threatens Withdrawal from Talks

[1](#)2. (C) OAS Special Envoy Ambassador John Biehl told the G-16 donors group on October 8 that the Zelaya commission to the OAS-sponsored negotiations notified the OAS the morning of October 8 that they were withdrawing from the talks. The reasons given were: that a number of Foreign Ministers had addressed de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti as "Mr. President" during their October 7 meeting with him, that Micheletti stated that any agreement he entered into would have to be ratified by the legislature, and that the Micheletti commission on October 8 reversed its position of the day before and said it could not agree to the restoration of President Zelaya to office.

[1](#)3. (C) Biehl said OAS Secretary-General Jose Miguel Insulza spoke to both commissions separately on October 8 and by phone to President Zelaya. Biehl said the OAS does not believe the order in which the points in the San Jose Accord are discussed to be significant. Therefore, Insulza suggested to the Zelaya commission that discussions commence with the point regarding institution of a government of national reconciliation. Biehl told the G-16 that the Zelaya commission was discussing this proposal and were to inform the OAS about two hours later at 16:00 EST whether they would definitely pull out of the talks. Biehl later informed the Ambassador that the commission would remain in the talks.

¶4. (C) The IMF representative asked Biehl whether Zelaya demonstrated any openness during his October 7 meeting with the Foreign Ministers. Biehl responded that Zelaya told the Foreign Ministers that every head of state in the hemisphere had telephoned him and told him that he should not return to office with his powers curtailed because he symbolizes the hemisphere's opposition to coups d'etat. Biehl noted that Zelaya did not offer any constructive solutions to his country's crisis and insisted that he is the solution to the crisis and not its problem. Biehl expressed frustration that at every meeting the pro-Zelaya faction warns that Honduras will plunge into violence if the OAS-sponsored talks fail.

Parallel Talks

¶5. (C) Biehl told the G-16 that the anti-coup resistance movement is engaged in negotiations directly with the de facto regime. He said the resistance is more interested in obtaining a guarantee that there will be a constituent assembly than in the restoration of President Zelaya to office. After Biehl's departure, Canadian Ambassadors Neil Reeder noted his concern that the solution to the crisis may be an agreement between the resistance and the regime that excludes Zelaya.

Moving Zelaya Out of Embassy

¶6. (C) Biehl told the G-16 representatives that the OAS is discussing with the de facto regime transferring President

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Zelaya from the Brazilian Embassy to his personal residence in Tegucigalpa. Biehl said there would be Honduran security forces outside the residence, but OAS personnel would be placed inside the house to ensure that there were no weapons in it. In response to a question from the German representative regarding President Zelaya's legal status in his residence, Biehl said it has been proposed that the OAS would post its flag outside the residence and the de facto regime would recognize the facility as enjoying diplomatic immunity.

Elections

¶7. (C) Biehl noted that the presidential candidates told the OAS Foreign Ministers on October 7 that they oppose President Zelaya's restoration to power. (Comment: the candidates' private positions are more nuanced. End comment.) He told the G-16 that the OAS is studying alternatives if the negotiations fail because Honduras cannot be permanently excluded from the community of nations. He noted that postponement of elections would not help restore democracy to Honduras. He said Steven Griner, Chief of the OAS Election Section, would be having individual meetings with the members of the G-16 to determine what type of electoral support nations might be willing and able to provide on very short notice.

¶8. (C) Comment. Biehl seemed tired and frustrated during his meeting with the G-16. While still committed to the San Jose Accord, the OAS seems to be starting to look down the road to a Plan B that would support the November 29 elections even if the negotiations fail. However, Biehl is a mercurial fellow whose mood swings from lofty optimism to doom and gloom.

LLORENS